

भारत का प्रधान कौंसल  
न्यू यार्क



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA  
NEW YORK

November 5, 2018

Dear

*Hon'ble Senator Osten,*

We have come across your letter dated March 19, 2018 in respect of Senate Bill 489, an Act Designating Various Days and Weeks. While being fully respectful of the legislative procedure of the General Assembly and Senate of the great State of Connecticut and I feel obliged to write to you as several references have been made to my country in your letter, which I am constrained to clarify to set the record straight.

In the letter, you mentioned that many Sikhs moved to US in the 1980s and 1990s to escape persecution in India. I would like to point out that there was no persecution of Sikhs in India. The Sikh faith was born in India and its an integral part of India's culture and ethos. India is home to more than 90% of the world Sikh population and the number exceeds to 20 million. There has been constant and healthy growth of the Sikh population in India. Sikhs occupy highest offices in India and in the Sikh majority State of Punjab they are part of democratic process and elect their own representative to State Assembly (much like the Connecticut Assembly), their own Chief Minister (Governor) and representatives to the National Parliament. Sikhs have been our Prime Minister, President, Army Chief and heads of major corporations. They excel in all walks of public life.

You also mentioned in the letter that the events leading to the November 1984 Sikh Genocide could be traced to the decades of violence perpetuated by the ruling majority in India. I would like to clarify that there has been no Sikh Genocide in India. The word Genocide cannot be used loosely. It refers to a systematic conspiracy or plot to exterminate a race such as the Nazi led extermination of Jews in Europe. There was anti-Sikh violence in 1984 after the killing of our Prime Minister by her own Sikh bodyguards. The anti-Sikh violence was reprehensible and the judicial process to bring the perpetrators to justice are going on in India. However, there has been no violence perpetrated by the ruling majority in India on Sikhs. India is the world largest democracy and there is no permanent ruling elite. Sikhs are part and parcel of the democratic process in India and they are as much the ruling class as any other peoples of India.

If one is looking for pre-cursor of the anti-Sikhs violence of November 1984, it was violence and terrorism in India perpetrated by Sikh separatists/ terrorists with the support of Pakistan from across the border. Several Sikh terrorist organizations are proscribed by the UN and US State Department and it is a continuous process.

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You further mentioned that 30,000 Sikhs were killed in the capital of New Delhi, over the course of four-day period and the decade that followed, over 150,000 people lost their lives to violence. These numbers are blatant exaggerations and do not convey the reality. These exaggerated numbers and false narrative are being purveyed by Sikh separatists/ terrorists who demand a separate State for the Sikhs, the so called 'Khalistan'. This is an old and discredited narrative and an attempt which has failed and been rejected by the people of Punjab. It nevertheless brought great deal of misery and grief to Sikhs and other peoples in Punjab and other places in India. However, the fringe/ radical elements of the Sikh Community in Connecticut appear to be oblivious of what has happened in the past and are carrying on their vociferous, pernicious and divisive campaign as they see money and power for themselves in this. They now want to now import this divisiveness to Connecticut.

We somehow feel that these fringe elements have taken benefit of your trust and made you to support this Bill with the help of not only distorted facts but also the divisive narrative which will seed discord among the peace loving and united Indian Community who live in great State of Connecticut. Already many of them have written to the Hon'ble Governor in this regard. I also met with the Hon'ble Governor of Connecticut in this regard and he was appreciate of our concerns which are brought out in this letter.

The ultimate objective of the fringe elements is to attempt break India. This, Hon'ble Senator, is never going to happen. Just like the United States of India, the Union of India is strong and indissoluble. In this context please allow me to quote President Lincoln who in his first inaugural address on March 4, 1861 had said and I quote "I hold that in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution the union of these states is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Physically speaking, we cannot separate this in connection with the so-called self-determination slogans that are being raised today. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other, but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse either amicable or hostile must continue between them." Unquote. Indeed, in 1868, your Supreme Court had to say, and I quote: "When Texas became one of the United States, she entered into an indissoluble relation. All the obligations of perpetual union and all the guarantees of republican government in the union attached at once to the state. It was the incorporation of a new member into the political body, and it was complete final."

India accepts this statement as truly characteristic of a multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious republic like India or the United States and as totally unassailable. It is the responsibility of nations to preserve the life and liberty of all their citizens under the law, regardless of race, religion, and ethnicity. We in India, like you here in this great democracy, are determined in our assertion that the rights of minority groups must be protected vigorously under the rule of law. Our constitution provides for this. Our people demand this. And our heritage requires it. The task that confronts democratic governments today is to maintain protection of human rights in the face of the most dangerous threat to the violation of human rights -- namely, the bullets of terrorists. India is committed to protecting its citizens from terrorism, and no government worth its name can shirk this responsibility. We are taking



scrupulous care to protect the rights of individuals under due process of law and punish human rights violations wherever they occur. In this difficult and delicate task, we are doing all that is humanly possible.

And as I have explained before, the anti-Sikh violence had its roots in years of terrorism perpetrated by Sikh terrorists and cannot be subject to selective analysis. The purpose of the people who persuaded you to support the State Resolution is weaken the India Union through divisive policies and this you will agree that we cannot allow to succeed.

I request your comprehension and understanding of the matter and I am confident that you will view this as not just the declaration of the reprehensible events of 1984 as genocide but also the ulterior motives of those who have persuaded you on this course of action. I will be happy to clarify any question that you may have in this regard.

Regards,

with kind regards,

Sincerely,

(Sandeep Chakravorty)

**Senator Cathy Osten**

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